

## CLAIMS

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for presenting a portion of a database, the method comprising steps of:

presenting a first tier of tabs, each tab in the first tier of tabs representing a first collection

of data objects corresponding thereto; and

in response to a selecting of a tab of the first tier to produce a selected first tier tab,

presenting a second tier of tabs, each tab in the second tier of tabs representing a second

collection of data objects, each data object in the second tier also belonging to the first

collection of data objects corresponding to the selected first tier tab.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein:

the second tier of tabs is not visible until after the selecting of a tab of the first tier.

3. The method of Claim 1, wherein:

the second tier of tabs is visible.

4. The method of Claim 1, further comprising a step of:

in response to a selecting of a tab of the second tier to produce a selected second tier tab,

presenting a third tier of tabs, each tab in the third tier of tabs representing a third

collection of data objects, each data object in the third tier also belonging to the second

collection of data objects corresponding to the selected second tier tab.

5. The method of Claim 4, wherein:

the third tier of tabs is not visible until after the selecting of a tab of the second tier.

6. The method of Claim 4, further comprising a step of:

in response to a selecting of a tab of the third tier to produce a selected third tier tab,  
 5 presenting a fourth tier of tabs, each tab in the fourth tier of tabs representing a fourth  
 collection of data objects, each data object in the fourth tier also belonging to the third  
 collection of data objects corresponding to the selected third tier tab.

7. The method of Claim 1, wherein:

10 the database is a catalog of products.

8. The method of Claim 1, wherein:

the presenting the first tier of tabs includes executing a process in a first computer system  
 and displaying the first tier of tabs on a display device of a second computer system; and  
 the selecting of a tab of the first tier to produce a selected first tier tab includes providing  
 15 a selection of the selected first tier tab to the first computer system.

9. The method of Claim 1, wherein:

after the selecting of the tab of the first tier to produce the selected first tier tab  
 representing a first collection of data objects, and in response to a selecting of a  
 20 subsequent tab of the first tier to produce a subsequent selected first tier tab, wherein the  
 first tier includes both the selected first tier tab and the subsequent selected first tier tab:

replacing the second tier of tabs with a subsequent second tier of tabs representing  
 a fourth collection of data objects; and

replacing the third tier of tabs with a subsequent third tier of tabs representing a fourth collection of data objects.

10. The method of Claim 1, further comprising a step of:

5        modifying a browser to perform the presenting the first tier of tabs.

11. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

receiving a scroll input corresponding to at least one of the first tier and the second tier;  
in response to receiving a scroll input, scrolling the corresponding at least one of the first  
10        tier and the second tier.

12. The method of Claim 1, wherein:

at least one of the first tier and the second tier is horizontal.

13. The method of Claim 1, wherein:

15        at least one of the first tier and the second tier is vertical.

14. The method of Claim 1, wherein:

at least one of the first tier and the second tier is horizontal and at least one of the first tier  
20        and the second tier is vertical.

15. The method of Claim 1, wherein:

the form representing the collection of records of tabs is visually scalable.

16. The method of Claim 1, further comprising a step of:

accessing the database over a network.

5 17. The method of Claim 16, wherein:

accessing the database over a network includes accessing the database over the Internet.

18. The method of Claim 16, wherein:

accessing the database includes reading a computer readable medium.

19. The method of Claim 16, wherein:

accessing the database over a network includes accessing a first portion of the database  
over the Internet and a second portion of the database over a computer readable medium.

5 20. The method of Claim 16, further comprising:

storing the portion of the database locally.

21. The method of Claim 1, comprising

accepting a text input search request from a user;

20 conducting a search and identifying at least one data object that satisfies the search  
request;

identifying at least one data object;

determining a second tier of tabs associated with the data object;

determining a first set of tabs associated with the data object; and  
 displaying a representation of the data object along with the first set of tabs and the  
 second set of tabs.

5 22. The method of Claim 1, comprising  
 presenting a graphic image on at least one of the first tier tabs.

23. The method of Claim 1, comprising  
 presenting a graphic image on at least one of the second tier tabs.

24. A method of accessing and presenting a plurality of catalogs, the method comprising:  
 presenting, on a graphic user interface, a plurality of tabs, each tab representing a library  
 of at least one catalog;  
 Presenting, in response to selection of a tab, at least one icon, each icon representing a  
 catalog;  
 15 accepting the selection of a first icon; and  
 presenting a first catalog in response to the first icon.

25. The method of claim 24 further comprising;

20 accepting the selection of a second icon;  
 presenting a second catalog in response to the second icon.

26. The method of claim 24, comprising

presenting the first catalog in a multi-tier tab format.

27. A method for presenting an electronic office products catalog, the method comprising:

assigning, for each office product, at least one product category name;

assigning, for each product category name, an alphabetic tab, such that the tab

corresponds to the first letter of the product category name;

assigning, for each office product, at least one page number of the electronic catalog  
where the office product will be displayed;

assigning, for each product category name, a set of page numbers corresponding to the  
pages of the electronic catalog at least one office product corresponding to the product  
category name will be displayed in the electronic office products catalog;

presenting a first tier of alphabetic tabs, each alphabetic tab displaying at least one letter;

in response to a selecting of an alphabetic tab, presenting a second tier of product  
category name tabs, such that a product category name tab is presented for each product  
category name beginning with the alphabetic letter of the selected alphabetic tab;

in response to a selecting of a product category name tab, presenting a third tier page  
number tabs, such that at least one page number tab is presented for each product  
category name; and

in response to a selecting of a page number tab, displaying the first page represented by  
the page number tab.

28. The method of claim 27 comprising

scrolling at least one of the alphabetic, product name, or page number tabs.

29. The method of claim 27 comprising

in response to a selecting of a product category name tab, presenting a third tier of  
product sub-category name tabs such that at least one sub-category name tab is presented  
for each product category name;

in response to a selecting of a product sub-category name tab, presenting a fourth tier of  
page number tabs, such that at least one page number tab is presented for each sub-  
product category name; and

in response to a selecting of a page tab, displaying the first page represented by the page  
number tab.

30. The method of claim 27 comprising

accessing the electronic office products catalog over a network.

31. The method of claim 27 comprising

storing the portion of the database locally.

32. A method for automatically creating an electronic catalog having at least one tier of  
selectable graphic images, the method comprising steps of:

selecting a group of records corresponding to a selectable graphic image;

determining whether the group of records fits on a first page;

if the group of records fits on the page, tagging all the records in the group with the page  
number of first page; and

if the group of records does not fit on the first page, splitting the records into a first subgroup and at least one other subgroup, tagging all the records in the first subgroup with the page number of the first page, and assigning each other subgroup to a new page associated with the subgroup.

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33. A method for automatically creating a custom electronic catalog from a larger catalog, the custom electronic catalog having at least one tier of selectable graphic images, the method comprising:

reviewing the larger catalog;

designating each item from the larger catalog to be included in the custom electronic catalog; and

for each designated item

selecting a group of records corresponding to a selectable graphic image;

determining whether the group of records fits on a first page;

if the group of records fits on the first page, tagging all the records in the group with a page number of the first page; and

if the group of records does not fit on the first page, splitting the records into a first subgroup and at least one other subgroup, tagging all the records in the first subgroup with the page number of the first page, and assigning each other subgroup to a new page associated with the subgroup.

34. A method for creating a electronic office products catalog, the method comprising:



Reading at least one data file, the data file representing information about a plurality of office products, the information for each office product including

an item number for the product,

a manufacturer name,

an optional location of a graphics image of the object,

product information such as narrative description, size, cost, and weight, and

at least one product category name;

assigning each office product to a page in the catalog;

assigning each page in the catalog at least one page number tab;

assigning each office product to at least one product category name;

assigning each product category name to at least one product category name tab;

assigning each product category name to at least one alphabetic tab;

displaying a first tier of user selectable alphabetic tabs;

displaying a second tier of user selectable product category name tabs such that product category name corresponds to a selected alphabetic tab;

displaying a third tier of user selectable page number tabs such that the page number tabs correspond to a selected product category name; and

displaying a page from the catalog such that the page corresponds to a selected page number tab.

35. The method of claim 34 wherein assigning each office product to a page in the catalog includes

selecting a proposed page for the office product;

determining whether there is room on the page to display the product information and image;

if the product information and image fits on the page, assigning the page number to the office product; and

5 if the product information and image does not fit on the page, changing the selected page and repeating the steps of determining whether there is room on the selected page until the product information and image fits on a selected page.

36. A method for presenting a portion of a database, the method comprising steps of:

10 presenting a bottom tier of tabs, each tab in the bottom tier of tabs representing a first collection of data objects corresponding thereto; and

in response to a selecting of a tab of the bottom tier to produce a selected bottom tier tab, presenting a form of selectable graphics images representing a collection of records of the database; and

15 presenting a next tier of tabs, each tab in the next tier of tabs representing a collection of tabs of the bottom tier of tabs.

37. The method of Claim 36, further comprising a step of:

receiving an action from the form.

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38. The method of Claim 37, wherein:

the action is a text entry.

39. The method of Claim 37, wherein:

the action is a quantity.

40. The method of Claim 37, further comprising:

in response to receiving an action, generating a record for subsequent action.

41. The method of Claim 37, further comprising:

generating a purchase order in response to receiving the action.

42. A method of presenting a plurality of electronic catalogs on a computer workstation, the method comprising

presenting a menu of electronic catalogs to a user from the workstation; and

in response to the selection of a catalog, displaying

a page from the selected electronic catalog,

a second tier of user selectable tabs, including at least one tab associated with the page, and

a first tier of user selectable tabs, including at least one tab associated with the second tier tab associated with the page.

43. The method of Claim 42 comprising displaying a product display page.

44. The method of Claim 42 comprising displaying an index page.